

**Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
Criminal Justice Committee
Meeting Minutes for March 31, 2015**

The DVCC Criminal Justice Committee met on March 31, 2015 at 1pm at the Middletown Police Department. Attending the meeting were Renee Buskirk (DOC), Linda Carmichael (Superior Court), Hon. Bonita Lee (JP Court), Liz Peck (DVCC), Hon. Brendan O'Neill (Public Defenders Office), Alana Wilder (WPD VS), Tara Andrews (Family Court), Ann Altemus (Child Inc.), Melissa Kearney (Probation & Parole), Deb Reed (DSP VS), Juan Rodriguez (Peoples Place), Natasha Smith (DVCC Staff).

Call to Order: Hon. Brendan O'Neill called the meeting to order.

Introductions: Introductions were made by all attendees.

Approve Minutes from 1/27/15: Minutes were approved with the following amendments: Blanche Creech (Peoples Place) was added to the list of those in attendance for the meeting. Also, Hon. Sheila Blakely requested that additional language be added to the Law Enforcement Training section. The language originally reads "Hon. Sheila Blakely (JP Court) stated that JP Court is open to having Judicial Officers from JP Court attend the Law Enforcement Trainings in the future." The amended language will now state: Hon. Sheila Blakely (JP Court) stated that JP Court is open to having Judicial Officers from JP Court attend the Law Enforcement Trainings in the future if other Judges are attending.

Old Business:

Project Passport

Tara Andrews (Family Court) stated that there is currently no update to Project Passport at this time. Tara did share progress with the Family Court Enhancement Project's (FCEP). She stated the FCEP has two subcommittees the Access to Justice Subcommittee and the Differentiation in Custody Decisions vs. PFA Subcommittee. Tara went on to state that Family Court is in the process of reviewing 100 New Castle County, 50 Kent County and 50 Sussex County files that have a PFA order and a Custody Petition to follow them through the process. By reviewing these files, Family Court hopes to get valuable data regarding Custody and PFA petitions and decisions. After reviewing these files, a report will be drafted providing recommendations and findings to the FCEP Management team. This report will be used to enhance training to Court Staff as well as Community partners. This Project is expected to complete data collection by the end of June 2015. The completion of the entire FCEP is expected to take place in September 2016.

Law Enforcement Training

Those present at the meeting were reminded that if anyone has any topics for Law Enforcement trainings please forward them to Adrienne Owen (DSP).

English only PFA order update

There is no update on this agenda item at this time.

Unserved PFA – update on driver’s license info

DVCC Criminal Justice Co-Chair, Hon. Brendan O’Neill (Public Defenders Office) sent a letter to the Chairman of the Delaware Police Chiefs Council, Chief William Bryson, regarding this issue. At the time of this meeting there has been no response from the Delaware Police Chiefs Council.

New Business

CJC FY2013 Funds

This issue was not discussed at the meeting. It was added to the agenda in error.

Visitation Exchange at Police Stations

This issue was added to the agenda at the request of Diane Glenn (Dover PDVS). Diane was not present at the meeting and this item will be added to the next meeting’s agenda. Alana Wilder (Wilmington PDVS) stated that she has had clients who have had visitation exchanges at Wilmington PD. Alana states that some clients have a false sense of security when having a visitation exchange at the police station. Natasha Smith (DVCC Staff) asked Tara Andrews (Family Court) if this is something Family Court could possibly include when reviewing Family Court files for the Family Court Enhancement Project.

Criminal Justice Committee Goals

Natasha Smith (DVCC Staff) stated that the DVCC is in the process of updating the DVCC website. The DVCC would like to include a summary of the Criminal Justice Committee’s work and Goals, as well as anything that would relate to the DVCC Criminal Justice Committee. Natasha Smith (DVCC Staff) read the following statement,

“The purpose of the Criminal Justice Committee is to continuously review the system response to domestic violence and to identify and implement improvements to the Criminal Justice system through policy development. This committee brings law enforcement, the courts, advocates and community partners together to resolve issues specific to the needs of those affected by domestic violence.”

Those present at the meeting agreed that would be great summary to add to the website and that Natasha Smith (DVCC staff) should send out the statement via email and committee members can vote or comment on the statement via email.

Next Meeting Date: To be announced.

Respectfully submitted by Natasha Smith (DVCC Staff) on 4/27/15.